

Common Conservation Practices For Grazing Grasslands

Developing a grazing system for healthier grasslands can lead to long-term economic and environmental sustainability. Conservation practices can be combined to address your specific resource concerns.

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is the principal program of the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for delivering financial assistance to private landowners. Please contact your local NRCS office for free technical assistance to develop a conservation plan.



Conservation Practice Standard (CPS) Prescribed Grazing (528)

Prescribed grazing is applied as part of a conservation system to accomplish one or more of the following:

- Improve or maintain health and vigor of key species and maintain a stable and desired plant community,
- Provide or maintain food, cover, and shelter for animals of concern,
- Maintain or improve water quality and quantity, and
- Reduce soil erosion and maintain or improve soil condition for resource sustainability.



CPS Fencing (382)

Fencing is a practice that may be applied on any area where control of animal or people movement is needed. Fences are not needed where natural barriers will serve the purpose. Cross fence may be barbed, electric, woven or portable fence for intensive grazing management. Considerations include:

- Wildlife movement needs,
- Livestock management, to include handling, location, adequate watering, and feeding facilities,
- Soil erosion potential when constructing a fence on steep slopes, and
- Improving forage quantity and quality to meet livestock demand.



CPS Watering Facility (614)

A watering facility (tank, trough, or other watertight container) provides water access at selected locations for livestock and/or wildlife. Watering facilities can be used on all land uses where there is a need for new or improved facilities. This facility:

- Protects and enhances vegetative cover through proper distribution of grazing,
- Controls erosion through better grassland management, and
- Protects streams and ponds from livestock contamination.



CPS Pipeline (516)

Pipelines are used to deliver water from a source of supply to points of use for livestock or wildlife to facilitate a prescribed grazing plan. For livestock water, the installation should have a capacity to provide seasonal high daily water requirements of 30 gallons per day for a cow/calf pair. Installation of a pipeline:

- Provides water to watering facilities,
- Facilitates implementation of a grazing system, and
- Provides water to livestock out of riparian zones.



CPS Water Wells (642)

Water wells are a primary source of water for livestock watering facilities or watering systems that use pipelines to deliver water to pastures. Water wells can:

- Provide water for livestock and wildlife, and
- Facilitate proper use of vegetation on rangeland, pastures, and wildlife areas.



CPS Pumping Plant (533)

Pumping plants (pumps) are used to deliver dependable water for livestock or wildlife purposes.

Pumping plants include:

- Renewable energy - solar pumps are used where traditional electrical sources are not feasible to install.



CPS Range Planting (550)

Range plantings are grass, forbs, and shrub seedlings made up of native species that were historically growing on a particular planting site. These plantings:

- Provide or improve forages for livestock,
- Provide or improve forage, browse, and cover for wildlife,
- Reduce erosion by wind and/or water,
- Improve water quality and quantity, and
- Increase carbon sequestration.



CPS Pasture and Hayland Planting (512)

Pasture/hayland plantings are native or introduced forages planted for production and/or conservation. These plantings:

- Improve or maintain livestock nutrition and/or health,
- Balance forage supply and demand during periods of low forage production,
- Reduce soil erosion and improve water quality, and
- Increase carbon sequestration.



CPS Integrated Pest Management (595)

Pest management utilizes environmentally sensitive prevention, avoidance, monitoring, and suppression strategies to manage weeds, insects, diseases, animals, and other organisms (including invasive and noninvasive species,) that directly or indirectly cause damage or annoyance. This management provides:

- Enhanced quality and quantity of plant communities, and
- Minimize negative impacts of pest control on soil resources, water resources, air resources, plant resources, animal resources, and/or humans.



CPS Stream Crossing (578)

A stream crossing consists of a stabilized area or structure constructed across a stream to provide a travel way for people, livestock, equipment, or vehicles. This practice can:

- Improve water quality by reducing sediment, nutrient, stream loading,
- Reduce a streambank and streambed erosion, and
- Provide a crossing for access to other grazed lands.